

REMARKS

This Amendment, submitted in response to the Office Action dated February 27, 2004, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 are now all the claims pending in the application.

I. Preliminary Matters

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner approve the drawings filed December 8, 2003.

As a further preliminary matter, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner initial the PTO/SB/08 A & B (modified) form filed on March 10, 2004.

II. Claim Rejections

Claims 1-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Narayan et al. (US Patent No. 6,035,323). Applicant submits the following in traversal of the rejection.

An exemplary embodiment of the present invention describes a printing station which eases the printing and managing process normally involved when printing images from a personal home computer. In particular, when using a private home computer, printers needed for creating high quality images are expensive and users are often incapable of fully using the printer and their computer in order to create high quality images. Furthermore, it is often difficult for a user to manage the data of photographed images.

Narayan discloses a method and apparatus for distributing digital media over a network. A collection of digital media is generated and transmitted from a client digital processing system

to a server digital processing system, and media which is presentable to other client digital processing systems which are coupled to the network is pregenerated. See Narayen claim 1. For example, a photo album is created by a user from the user's home computer, then transmitted to a server which publishes the user's album as viewable HTML pages. Therefore, a user need not learn the HTML language, and multiple programs necessary for publishing pages on the Internet are not needed.

Based on the foregoing description, it is apparent that Narayen does not describe the printing of image data as described in an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, nor does Narayen teach the claimed elements, as further discussed below.

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites a plurality of printing stations with functions to read digital image data, to print the data by performing necessary image processing and to transmit or receive the image data. The Examiner asserts that client computer systems 121, 125, 135, and 137 of Narayen teach the claimed plurality of printing stations and that any computer system, that can be considered a printing system, has the ability of performing the printing of the image data.

However, there is no indication that the client computer systems 121, 125, 135, and 137 perform image processing for the printing of digital image data. In particular, Narayen does not pertain to image processing as discussed above. Narayen merely distributes or publishes images from a digital acquisition device for viewing over a network.

Claim 1 further recites a management system connected to each printing station via a network. The Examiner asserts that the Internet service providers (ISP's) and the web server of Narayen teach the claimed management server. However, in Narayen, a connection between a

client computer system and an ISP and web server is established when a user desires to create an online album. See Abstract. For example, client computer systems 121, 125, 135, and 137 do not appear connected to the ISP and web server unless a user at either client computer system 121, 125, 135, or 137 desires to create or view an album. Therefore, a management system is not connected to each printing station.

For at least the above reasons, claim 1 and its dependent claims should be deemed patentable.

Claim 4

The Examiner asserts that step 281 in Fig. 7 of Narayen discloses that the management system performs remote controlled maintenance on each printing station based on the management data, as recited in claim 4.

However, step 281 describes that a client system logs into a server via a connection and that the client system sends login information. Merely because a client logs in to a system, does not mean that a management system performs remote controlled maintenance on each printing station. For at least this reason claim 4 should be deemed patentable.

Claim 5

Claim 5 recites that in the printing station, the user can specify an image to be printed and an image to be transferred and stored in the management system from images displayed on a monitor screen. The Examiner asserts that Narayen step 201 in Fig. 4, step 227 in Fig. 5 and col. 1, lines 37-40 teaches the elements of claim 5.

Step 201 in Fig. 4 describes the inputting of digital image data from a digital camera into a digital processing system. It appears that all of the images from a digital camera are being

input into a digital processing system. There is no indication that a user is specifying a particular image.

Step 227 in Fig. 5 describes that a publishing software transmits album format data and signatures to a server computer system. Album format data and signatures are not an image as claimed.

Col. 1, lines 37-40 states that a user can print an image from their digital camera. However, there is no indication that the printing is performed from a client computer system 121, 125, 135, and 137 (printing station as cited by the Examiner) or that the selected image is specified by a user from images displayed on a monitor screen.

For at least the above reasons, claim 5 should be deemed patentable.

Claim 8

Claim 8 recites a currency processing unit wherein the currency processing unit identifies currency inserted into the system, processes a cost to be charged to a client and returns currency to the client. The Examiner asserts that in Narayen, security of the management system is established with the user in the Internet. Therefore, the Examiner contends that the management system would inherently charge any client who would like to view the private image data.

The Examiner's reasoning is unclear. In particular, merely because a secured system exists does not mean that a client would be charged. Furthermore, the Examiner has provided no basis in fact or technical reasoning for such an assertion. MPEP 2112.

Moreover, assuming a user was charged in the system of Narayen, there is no indication of a currency processing unit that identifies currency inserted into the system, processes a cost to be charged to a client and returns currency to the client.

For at least the above reasons, claim 8 should be deemed patentable.

Claim 11

Claim 11 recites that the image categories comprise images of family, personal portraits, scenery, animals or plants. The Examiner asserts that the image data would inherently include images of family, personal portraits, scenery, animals or plants.

However, claim 11 recites that the image categories, and not image data, include images of family, personal portraits, scenery, animals or plants. There is no indication of family, personal portraits, scenery, animals or plants as categories and attribute information in Narayan. Therefore, claim 11 should be deemed patentable.

III. New Claims

Applicant has claims 11-16 to provide a more varied scope of protection. Claims 11-16 should be deemed patentable by virtue of their dependency to claim 1 for the reasons set forth above.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.


Respectfully submitted,

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